



## Understanding the intersections of reciprocity and organizational capacity

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### Summary

A great deal has been written about the importance of reciprocity in university-community partnerships. But is all reciprocity created equally? This research examines the role of organizational capacity in understanding the reciprocal relationship between community partners, faculty, and students in service-learning and campus-community partnerships. Faculty members may have a certain perspective on what a community partner needs and on what a student needs in a given class. Students may see their own needs and assets differently and they may even see different community needs than the faculty. Finally, the community partner may identify their own needs and assets in yet a third way.

This research relates organizational capacity of partners' theories with reciprocity theories to improve our understanding of the varying definitions of reciprocity. We seek to understand how we can maximize assistance to the community, honor the voices of both student and community partner, and maximize student learning. These research questions are addressed through a case study analysis

examining the creation of a non-profit incubator in Salt Lake City, Utah. Partners include more than six community and campus-based entities and several grassroots, non-profit organizations.

This poster presentation shares the theoretical and practical bases for the creation of the non-profit incubator and the partnerships that are supporting its development. Using qualitative data collected in 2010, 2011, and 2012 we illustrate the concept of reciprocity of relationships from the perspectives of faculty, students, and community partners, highlight the differences in perspectives, and offer a theoretical framework for analyzing the importance of these differences.

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